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ABSTRACT

This document, which was created by a work group of literacy program coordinators in the state of Washington, is designed for the following purposes: to provide a set of written standards for quality volunteer adult tutoring programs; to list criteria by which Washington's State Board for Community and Technical Colleges can award Volunteer Tutor Coordination grant monies and monitor grant recipients' performance; and to serve as a self-assessment tool for program coordinators and boards/advisory committees. The introduction explains the document's major purposes and defines relevant terms. Chapter 1 lists standards regarding the following elements of management of quality tutoring programs: mission statement, relevant goals, governance, community relations, resource development, financial management, personnel management, and facilities. Presented in chapter 2 are standards related to the following student elements: student outreach, recruitment, intake, and orientation; matching; and ongoing student support. Chapter 3, which deals with volunteers, contains standards related to volunteer outreach, recruitment, intake, and orientation; matching; and on-going volunteer support. Also included in chapters 1 through 3, respectively, are standards for evaluating programs from the standpoints of program management, students, and volunteers. (MN)

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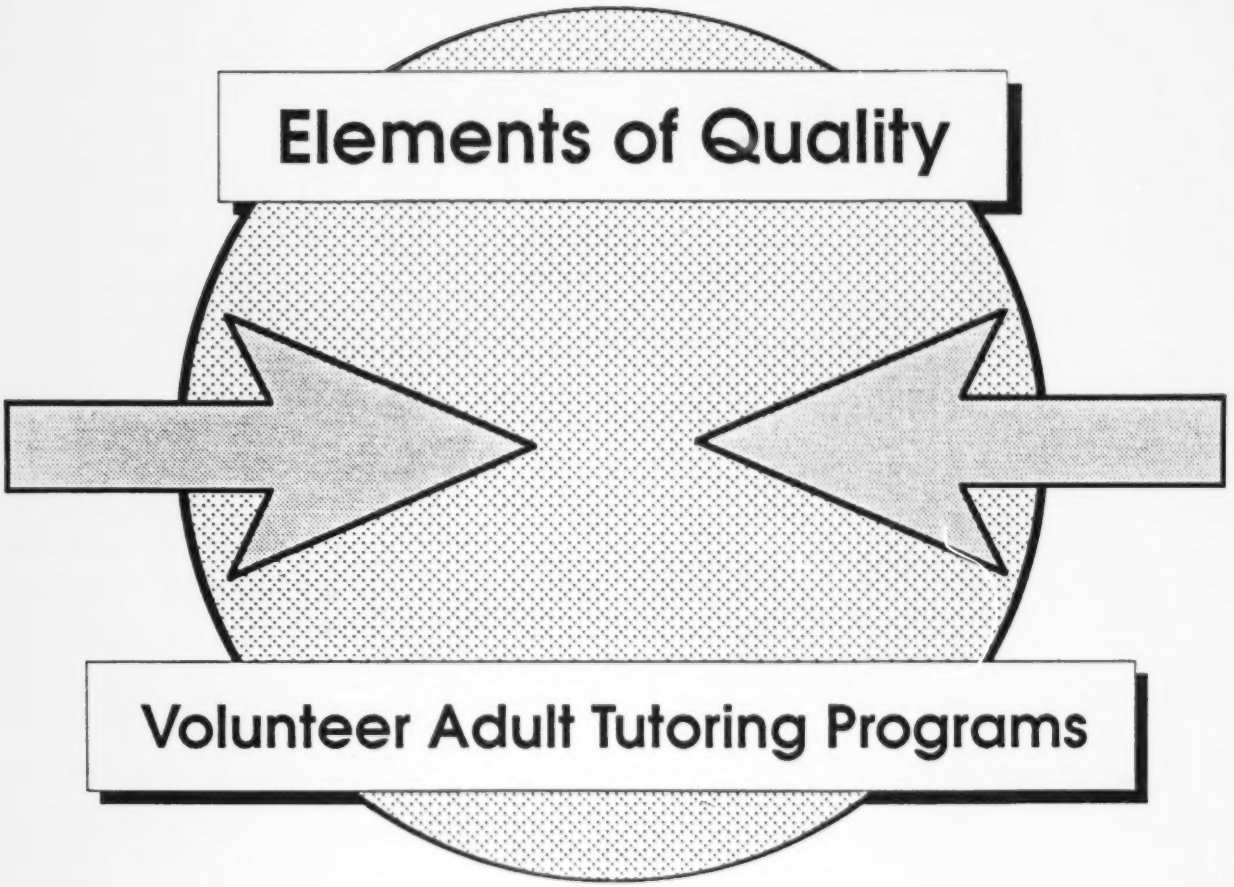
ED 369 879

Elements of Quality



Volunteer Adult Tutoring Programs

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The Volunteer Tutor Coordination Program
of the Office of Adult Literacy
of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
in Washington State

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The development of these program standards was initiated and supported by the Volunteer Tutor Coordination Program of the Office of Adult Literacy of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges in Washington State. For further information about the Volunteer Tutor Coordination Program, these program standards, or the process of developing these standards, contact:
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Elements of Quality

Volunteer Adult Tutoring Programs

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to promote quality standards for volunteer adult tutoring programs. This document was created by a work group of literacy program coordinators in Washington State who believe in . . .

- people potential
- program standards
- services of the highest quality, because students deserve them
- programming based on needs
- volunteers, students and program staff working as a team
- community mobilization
- responsible and responsive organizations affecting change in our communities
- the need for initial and on-going training for volunteers and staff
- the need for adequate resources to deliver quality services

This document was designed with three uses in mind . . .

- as a set of written standards for quality volunteer adult tutoring programs
- as criteria by which the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges can award Volunteer Tutor Coordination grant monies, and monitor performance of grant recipients
- as a self-assessment tool for Program Coordinators and Boards/Advisory Committees

It is likely that no volunteer adult tutoring program in Washington has implemented *all* the elements outlined in this document. However, elements included here do reflect outstanding program practices being implemented in Washington State today.

Definitions

The members of the work group believe the standards included here apply to volunteer adult tutoring programs which are . . .

- private, non-profit incorporated literacy organizations
- operated by community or technical colleges
- operated by churches or private, non-profit organizations which offer a variety of services
- literacy coalitions, incorporated or not
- unincorporated groups

Tutor: usually a volunteer; however all references to *tutor* in this document apply equally to alternatively-funded people working as tutors (e.g., work study students or Student Literacy Corps enrollees)

Volunteer: includes tutors and volunteers carrying out non-tutoring (administrative, organizational, Board, etc.) work for the program

Literacy: as defined in the National Literacy Act of 1991, *literacy* means "an individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals and develop one's knowledge and potential"

In this document, literacy includes English as a Second Language students as well as people for whom English is their first language. Most of the elements in this document apply equally to programs serving either type of student, or both types. Where an element applies to only the former type of student, the term *ESL* or *English as a Second Language* is used. Where an element applies to only the latter type of student, the term *basic* is used.

Chapter I: MANAGEMENT

Management Elements

1. Mission Statement

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has a written mission statement, which . . .

  - is based on community needs
  - states why the program exists
  - is officially adopted by the Board of Directors/Advisory Committee
  - describes who the program will serve
  - describes what the program will do
  - is collectively developed/written
  - is achievable, is within the program's capacity
  - is inspiring
  - is constantly reaffirmed and evaluated

2. Relevant Goals

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has short- and long-range written goals, which . . .

  - respond to community needs
  - are reasonable within the program's mission and resources
  - are developed by Board, staff, and program participants
  - are concrete, specific, measurable
  - state who is responsible
  - are approved by the Board of Directors/Advisory Committee

3. Governance

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has a formal written organizational document (e.g., by-laws)
- has a Board of Directors (non-profit corporation) or an Advisory Committee whose members . . .

  - are representative of and responsive to the community
  - are knowledgeable and supportive of the organization and program
  - understand their legal and financial responsibilities

- provides orientation, training, and written job description(s) for Board/Advisory Committee members
- has a Program Coordinator trained in Board work and Board relations

4. Community Relations

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has program brochure(s) appropriate for volunteer recruitment, student recruitment, and fund raising
- educates the community and decision-makers (e.g., local legislators) about needs being addressed by the program
- has methods of communicating program and student success
- maintains contacts with the (local) media
- has a public relations plan
- maintains communication with community constituents
- includes community and business leaders, and politicians on the mailing list
- designs roles for students in community relations
- promotes public awareness of adult literacy

5. Resource Development

A quality tutoring program . . .

- knows what its true costs are, including the value of in-kind support
- has a diversified funding and fund raising plan, including in-kind support
- has a Board/Advisory Committee trained in fund raising
- has a Board/Advisory Committee actively involved in fund raising
- budgets funds for public relations and fund raising
- collaborates with other organizations, services, and educational institutions to maximize/share resources

6. **Financial Management**

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has an annual budget approved by the Board of Directors or Advisory Committee
- has an annual financial review or audit conducted by an outside entity
- maintains appropriate financial checks and balances
- maintains up-to-date federal, state and local legal and financial filings
- is adequately and appropriately insured
- has thoroughly considered issues of program liability

7. **Personnel Management**

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has job descriptions for all staff
- has written, up-to-date, comprehensive personnel policies
- budgets money for staff development
- conducts annual performance reviews of volunteers and staff
- considers alternative personnel sources (e.g., work study or Washington Service Corps enrollees)

8. **Facilities**

A quality tutoring program . . .

- has a central, public office/tutoring center
- ensures tutoring takes place in program-approved locations that are accessible and safe
- has facilities adequate to meet the space, scheduling, and resource needs of all program participants

Management Evaluation

A quality tutoring program . . .

- defines the purpose and process of management evaluation by . . .

  - forming clear objectives . . .
  - establishing standards of achievement . . .

    . . . that are clearly related to mission and goals, organization and governance, program design and outcomes

- evaluates by considering all of the following:

  - clearly defined mission
  - meaningful goals
  - relevant and effective programs
  - competent staff
  - adequate resources
  - appropriate facilities
  - able leadership
  - emphasis on improvement
  - supportive administrative structure
  - linkages within the community

- uses the evaluation process to assist in at least three ways:

  - developing new programs
  - improving on-going programs
  - appraising the overall effectiveness of programs in meeting their objectives

- incorporates into evaluations:

  - planning documents, annual reports, long-range program plans, program evaluation studies, program outlines that identify evaluation and assessment procedures, student and volunteer evaluations
  - interviews with board members, staff, volunteers, students for evidence of degree of participation by each group
  - interviews with users of evaluation results (how and for what purposes evaluation results are used by each group)

- uses evaluation results for planning and decision making about the development, retention or elimination of programs

Chapter II: STUDENTS

Student Elements

Steps to Student Commitment

Give information about program
Get information from student
Give specific information about tutoring
= formal commitment

provide/exchange information when prospective student is referred, initiates phone call, or walks in

one-on one interview

group orientation

assessment

commitment

match/placement

The intake and orientation process is mutual. The process is designed exchange information between the program and the prospective student. It is designed to ensure that the student has a clear understanding of his/her responsibilities, and that the student is committed to the job.

The matching and placement process is designed to ensure that the student is comfortable with the assignment, and that it will help the student reach his or her goals.

1. Student Outreach and Recruitment

A quality tutoring program . . .

- assesses student needs in the community
- targets priority group(s) for recruitment (e.g., ESL and/or basic)
- recruits through direct contact with other agencies serving needs of student groups
- develops an outreach/recruitment plan with input from students
- has an outreach message with materials targeted and accessible to student groups

2. Student Intake Process

A quality tutoring program . . .

- interviews all prospective students face-to-face to . . .
  - identify learning goals
  - identify interests, abilities, background, and educational experience
  - determine student's motivation
  - discuss life situations which are learning barriers
  - assess learning styles and preferences
  - identify tutoring preferences
  - make appropriate referrals
- views the interview as a mutual screening and assessment process
- assesses all prospective students with appropriate tools or processes
- assists prospective students to develop realistic expectations
- determines if the program can appropriately serve the prospective student
- accepts new students on the basis of student needs and the appropriateness of the program's services

3. Student Orientation

A quality tutoring program . . .

- conducts an orientation for prospective students, which may be part of the interview, which . . .
  - explains the programs, its philosophy and mission
  - explains mutual student and program expectations
  - describes the specific responsibilities of students and tutors
  - discusses realistic expectations
  - explains costs (e.g., books and materials)
  - specifies who to contact for other concerns
  - lists program and community resources
  - introduces the prospective student to the physical facilities
  - provides interpreters, if appropriate
  - introduces the program staff
  - describes the matching process and timeframe

4. Matching

A quality tutoring program . . .

- gives information to the student about the tutor's abilities, interests, background, and goals
- arranges a meeting with the student, the tutor, and a staff member (and, if appropriate, an interpreter)
- assists the tutor/student team to further define learning goals
- helps make arrangements for tutoring times and locations
- informs or supplies the tutoring pair with appropriate instructional materials
- presents expectations of tutoring for student and tutor
- ensures the student and tutor sign a written contract
- requires follow-up contact with the program after matching
- outlines procedures if problems occur with the match
- provides forms and procedures to document progress

5. On-Going Student Support

A quality tutoring program . . .

- plans for on-going written and personal contact with each student about program activities, social events, meetings, and special opportunities
- announces events well ahead of time by mailing or giving written notices, or presenting a calendar at placement
- maintains resources for the student and tutor, such as . . .

  - a (full service) resource library
  - a list of community resources
  - access to mentors in the program
  - educational and professional development opportunities

- facilitates support groups for students and tutors
- promotes participation in the entire program (e.g., training, public relations, mentoring, newsletter)
- publicly recognizes student achievements and volunteer contributions

Student Evaluation

A quality tutoring program . . .

- defines the purpose and process of student evaluation by . . .

  - forming clear objectives . . .
  - establishing standards of achievement . . .

    . . . that are clearly related to the program's mission and goals, and to the goals of students served, and funders' information needs

- carries out student evaluation by considering all of the following . . .

  - initial intake/assessment information
  - contracts listing goals agreed to by student and tutor
  - tutor assessment information
  - formalized final tutor report of student accomplishments
  - lesson summaries reporting progress toward goals
  - formalized assessment of progress as prescribed intervals
  - post-testing utilizing program-chosen informal and/or formal tests
  - regular contract renewal and goal reviews
  - formal program recognition of student achievements
  - tracking of student tutoring and study hours
  - formal evaluation of goal completion
  - appropriateness/effectiveness of instructional approach and materials
  - "next step"/ referral information and/or written recommendations

- uses the student evaluation process to assist in . . .

  - improving instructional effectiveness
  - improving student goal achievement and retention
  - improving on-going programming
  - appraising the overall effectiveness of programs in meeting students' goals

- incorporates into student evaluations . . .

  - written reports
  - tutor assessments
  - staff assessments
  - students' self-assessments
  - goal reviews
  - quantifiable formal and/or informal measures and instruments

- uses student evaluation results for planning and decision making about the development, retention, or discontinuation of services to students.

Chapter III: VOLUNTEERS

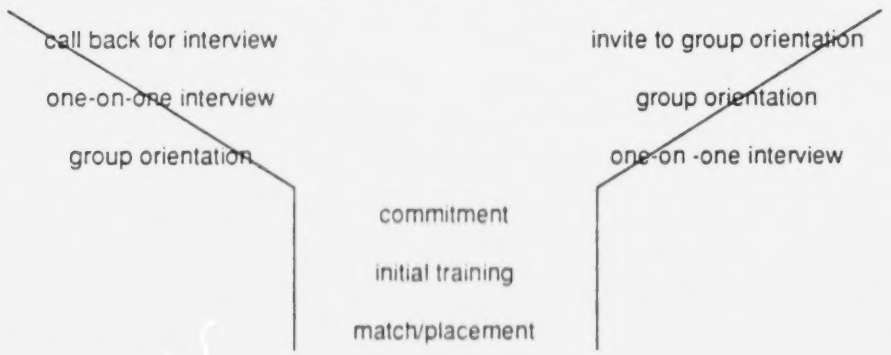
Volunteer Elements

Steps to Volunteer Commitment'

Give information about program
Get information from prospective volunteer } = formal commitment
Give specific information about volunteering

exchange information when prospective volunteer
initiates phone call or walks in, including tutoring and non-tutoring opportunities

mail or give printed information packet



The intake and orientation process is mutual. The process is designed to exchange information between program and prospective volunteer. It is designed to ensure that the volunteer has a clear understanding of his or her responsibilities and is committed to the job.

When group orientation occurs before the one-on-one interview, the orientation is also a screening process. When the one-on-one interview occurs first, it is the screening process; the orientation then is to orient volunteers to the program and begin to create bonding to the program and among the group.

The matching and placement process is designed to ensure that the volunteer is comfortable with their assignment and that it is a good use of the volunteers' skills.

1. **Volunteer Outreach and Recruitment**

A quality tutoring program . . .

- targets volunteer recruitment based on program needs and volunteer availability to best serve the students and the program
- gives a clear, realistic description of the program and of all volunteer opportunities in recruitment efforts
- recruits for volunteers to tutor both basic and ESL students, as appropriate to the programs' students' needs
- develops an outreach/recruitment plan with input from volunteers

2. **Volunteer Intake Process**

A quality tutoring program . . .

- conducts an intake process for prospective volunteers which provides an opportunity for mutual screening, assessment and commitment
- conducts a one-on-one interview with every prospective volunteer to . . .

  - identify interests, abilities, background, and experience
  - determine motivation for tutoring
  - identify tutoring preferences

- assess the appropriateness of the prospective volunteer's interests and abilities
- informs prospective volunteers of all types of volunteer opportunities available with the program, both tutoring and non-tutoring
- has specific procedures for screening out inappropriate volunteers in a professional manner

3. **Volunteer Orientation**

A quality tutoring program . . .

- conducts a group orientation for prospective tutors, which . . .

  - explains the program, its philosophy and mission
  - includes information about the students in the program
  - explains mutual volunteer and program expectations
  - describes the specific responsibilities of tutors and students
  - explains costs (e.g., books, materials, and training)
  - discusses realistic expectations
  - specifies who to contact for other concerns
  - lists program and community resources
  - describes and explains the need for documentation (recordkeeping) procedures
  - introduces prospective tutors to the physical facilities
  - introduces the program staff
  - gives an overview of training
  - describes the matching process and timeframe

4. Matching

A quality tutoring program . . .

- gives information to the tutor about the student's abilities, interests, background and goals
- arranges a meeting with the student, the tutor, and a staff member (and, if appropriate, an interpreter)
- assists the student/tutor to further define learning goals
- helps make arrangements for tutoring times and locations
- informs or supplies the tutoring pair with appropriate instructional materials
- presents expectations of tutoring for tutor and student
- ensures the student and tutor sign a written contract
- requires follow-up contact with the program after matching
- outlines procedures if problems occur with the match
- provides forms and procedures to document progress

5. Volunteer Training

A quality tutoring program . . .

- conducts training for all new tutors
- has written job description(s) for volunteer tutors
- conducts group, workshop-style training for new tutors which is at least twelve hours long, and includes method (presentation, demonstration, practice, questions) and content (socio-cultural information about the student, tutor/student relationship, learning theory, teaching skills, student assessment, goal setting, lesson planning)
- has a written training curriculum with learning goals and objectives, and prescribed activities
- periodically evaluates the training curriculum and training materials ensure training fits changing needs and instructional philosophies
- conducts the training with professional teachers or trained trainers
- conducts on-going in-service training for volunteer tutors

The goal of initial tutor training is to provide resources, instill appropriate techniques, and equip the volunteers with sensitivity to students' needs (both basic and ESL). Training should be suited to the specific needs of the students served.

A quality tutoring program . . .

- conducts specific job training appropriate to the needs of non-tutoring volunteers
- has written job description for all non-tutoring volunteer functions
- conducts on-going in-service training for non-tutoring volunteers

6. On-Going Volunteer Support

A quality tutoring program . . .

- plans for on-going written and personal contact with each volunteer about program activities, social events, meetings, or special opportunities
- announces events well ahead of time by mailing or giving written notices, or presenting a calendar at placement
- maintains resources for the tutor and student, such as . . .

  - a (full service) resource library
  - a list of community resources
  - access to mentors in the program
  - educational and professional development opportunities

- facilitates support groups for tutors and students
- promotes participation in the entire program (e.g., training, public relations, mentoring, newsletter)
- publicly recognizes student achievements and volunteer contributions

Volunteer Evaluation

A quality tutoring program . . .

- defines the purpose and process of volunteer evaluation by . . .

  - forming clear objectives . . .
  - establishing standards of achievement . . .

    . . . that are clearly related to the program's mission and goals, to the volunteers' responsibilities and the tutoring environment, and to the progress of students

- carries out volunteer evaluation by considering all of the following . . .

  - timely reports, attendance, and compliance with program procedures
  - criteria and content of volunteer training
  - appropriate, ethical, and culturally sensitive behavior
  - completion of assignments and achievement of volunteer and program goals
  - effective use of instructional methods to enhance student goal achievement and retention
  - adherence to program training guidelines
  - willingness to participate in ongoing/additional training
  - contracts listing goals agreed to by student and tutor
  - student assessment information
  - formal program recognition of volunteer achievements

➥ uses the volunteer evaluation process to assist in . . ..

- improving volunteer training and retention
- improving instructional effectiveness
- improving on-going programming
- making appropriate student/tutor and work assignments
- making the best use of volunteers' talents and skills
- appraising the overall effectiveness of programs in meeting students' goals

➥ incorporates into volunteer evaluations . . .

- written application and reports
- student assessments
- staff assessments
- volunteers' self-assessments
- goal reviews

➥ uses volunteer evaluation results for planning and decision making about the development, retention, or discontinuation of programs and volunteers.